The Park Avenue Synagogue

Bulletin

December 9, 1946 KISLEV 16, 5707

MOEHLMAN TALKS ON CHURCH AND STATE

SECOND IN LECTURE SERIES

The second lecture in the Adult Education Series on "Current Battlefronts of Democracy" will take place at the Friday evening services on December 20th, when Dr. Conrad Moehlman will be the guest preacher. His subject at that time will be "Are the Churches Encroaching on Our Education System?" Dr. Moehlman, a member of the faculty of the Rochester-Colgate Divinity School, a division of Colgate University, has long been an outstanding proponent of more harmonious relations between Christians and Jews. He has been one of the most vigorous and forthright members of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, holding to the thesis that the unfortunate relationships between Christians and Jews, to the extent they exist, are primarily the problem of Christendom. He has consistently stated his belief that fundamental changes must be made in the interpretation of religious symbols and concepts where they inherently tend to breed prejudice, on the part of either religious group.

Dr. Moehlman's lecture on the subject of religion in the schools is expected to deal with the need for those religious groups which have completely democratized their own thinking to introduce their teachings and ethics into the general educational pattern. Unfortunately at the time of going to press, THE BULLETIN was unable to procure an excerpt from Dr. Mochlman's talk for publication.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SABBATH EVE

Friday, Dec. 13th, 8:30 o'clock
Dr. Jacob Kohn will preach on
"The Function of Fear in Religion"

Saturday, Dec. 14th, 10:00 a.m.
Junior Congregation Service
at 10:30 a.m.

ENTIRE MEMBERSHIP WILL ATTEND HANUKKAH PARTY DECEMBER 17th

The *Hanukkah* party which the Park Avenue Synagogue is giving for its members and their immediate families on Tuesday evening, December 17th, at 8:30 o'clock, will be one of the best parties of the year, according to the plans which have been perfected. In addition to the gay carnival which will take place in the Vestry Rooms, at which all the traditional *Hanukkah* customs will be observed, and refreshments offered, the Sisterhood has prepared, for the beginning of the evening, a special performance which will take place in the Synagogue proper.

Under the chairmanship of Mrs. Grace Gilbert who supervised the casting, and Mr. Morton Wishengrad who directed the script which he originally wrote for "The Eternal Light" program, there will be offered the dramatization of "A Sound of Music", one of the best and most moving scripts which have been presented on Sunday mornings over the National Broadcasting System, under the sponsorship of the Jewish Theological Seminary. Members of the Synagogue will take the parts in the script, and Cantor David Putterman, who is on the program, will sing the music exactly as he did over the radio. Mr. Geller and the choir will offer the incidental music, as well as other *Hanukkah* singing.

Every member of the Synagogue and the Sisterhood received a ticket of admission to the *Hanukkah* party, which will be good only for members and their immediate families. Due to the large number of guests expected, admission will be by ticket only.

In view of the fact that *Hanukkah* marks the beginning of SOS week, it is hoped that everyone who comes to the party will bring at least one can of food to send overseas. (See SOS story on this page.)

SISTERHOOD ASKS GIFTS FOR SOS

The SOS (Supplies for Overseas Survivors) Executive Committee has set aside *Hanukkah* week, from December 17 through December 24th, a traditional time for giving, to concentrate its appeal for cans of food and other gifts for unfortunate Jews throughout the world. Not only are members asked to bring cans to the *Hanukkah* party, and to all Synagogue functions during that week, but plans have been made for intensive efforts of various kinds to augment the gifts which are so badly needed.

The Sisterhood of the Park Avenue Synagogue has appointed Mrs. Louis Greenstein as chairman of the SOS Collections. It will participate in the distribution of the silk tags "SOS—I Gave to Save a Life", which are being offered donors of food at grocery store collections and other gatherings, such as our Party when guests will bring foodstuffs. It has also asked members of the Sisterhood and other Synagogue members to volunteer to telephone or call on at least ten people to give to the SOS Collection. Sisterhood has also made a strong appeal for layettes which are urgently needed overseas, more than ever before. Specific appeal is being made to members who have access to material of any kind to furnish it to the Synagogue as soon as possible for sewing.

Youth groups are being asked to hold dances and special events to which canned foods are part of the admission. Children are being asked to make up kits, which will include essential school supplies, sewing material, soaps, toilet ar-

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SABBATH EVE

Friday, Dec. 20th, 8:30 o'clock
Dr. Conrad Moehlman will
preach on
"Is The Church Encroaching on
Our Educational System?"

Saturday, Dec. 21st, 10:00 a.m.
Junior Congregation Service
at 10:30 a.m.

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VOL. I No. 7

From the Desk of Rabbi Steinberg

Jewish ethic is concerned not only with the heights but with the plains also, with the commonplace in life as well as the exalted. If its commandments on occasion are as lofty as the bidding to love one's neighbor as one's self, they are sometimes as homely as the precept that an employer may not delay paying out his servant's wages. Judaism in a word is a religion for saints, but also for ordinary human beings struggling to be as good as they may. Which is what Moses meant when he said:

"For this commandment which I command thee this day is not too hard for thee . . . it is not up in heaven . . . neither is it beyond the sea . . . but it is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and thy heart that thou mayest do it . . . "

Indeed, some of my favorite passages, Scriptural and Rabbinic, fall in this category of the commonsensical. I may thrill to the other kind of utterance, that which is up in the clouds, but I am often helped most and guided most firmly by down to earth precepts.

Consider, for example, the wisdom of the following prayer from the 30th Chapter of Proverbs:

"Give me neither poverty nor riches,
Provide me with food sufficient for my needs;
Lest I be full, and deny Thee,
And say: 'Who is the Lord?'
Or lest I be poor and be led to steal,
And so disgrace the name of my God."

Can any sentiment be conceived more penetrating or more valid than this?

* * *

As with Scripture, so with rabbinic literature. The lofty, glorious and utopian elements are there, but also the plain and homespun.

Illustrations innumerable suggest themselves, from which I here present two of which I am especially fond:

Expounding the verse (Leviticus XIX, 18) "Thou shalt not take vengeance nor bear a grudge," the rabbis interpret this to mean that if you seek to borrow your neighbor's axe, and he refuses it, and then he asks to borrow your saw, and you, remembering his ungraciousness, are tempted to refuse, you may not harbor a grudge but must lend him your tool. Nay more, when you do so you may not say, "see, I am more generous than you," for to speak so is to take revenge, which is forbidden.

How unpretentious this instruction is, but how perceptive as to human nature and how needed!

For my second example of down to earth Jewish ethics, I list one of the simplest but most humane verses in all the Bible, together with some rabbinic applications of it. In all moralistic writing there is no saying more unpretentiously compassionate than Leviticus XIX, 14:

"Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind."

Wise and kind as is this instruction, it is no more so than those which the ancient rabbis deduced from it. To them, all advantage-taking of a fellow's weakness, all tempting of him to evil, was interdicted as constituting a stumbling block before the blind.

On this score they forbade that a man slap his grown up child, or offer a cup of wine to a Nazirite (pledged to total abstinence) or price merchandise with no intention of making a purchase, or leave money about with the deliberate intention of testing his servant's honesty.

For in each such instance advantage is taken of another's powerlessness, to push him toward sin. The same cruelty is present which is involved in deliberately tripping up a blind man.

* * *

Perhaps the climactic example of this type of hard-headed, down-to-cases morality is the parting instruction given by a dying rabbi to his disciples:

"My children," said he, "fear God as you fear men."

"What," they cried aghast, "ought we not fear God more?"

"Fear Him as much," the sage replied wryly, "it will do."

—MILTON STEINBERG

THE BULLETIN was sorry to learn that Rabbi Erwin Zimet has been ill in the West Side Hospital. Our sincerest wishes for a speedy recovery.

AN OPEN LETTER

Dear Parents:

On Wednesday evening, November 20th, the Parents' Association had the first of its contemplated four meetings for the School Year 1946-7 at the Synagogue. It was an exceedingly interesting meeting presided over skillfully by its President, Mrs. Harriet Howe.

In the course of the evening, there was a community sing under the direction of our Cantor Putterman. We then had the pleasure of listening to Rabbi Kertzer who spoke on the theme "What Makes Your Sammy Run?"—the psychological factors involved in the Jewish education of the young. There was a Jewish Book Exhibit beautifully arranged under the able chairmanship of Mrs. Seymour Wimpfheimer, and a collation was served in the Vestry Rooms.

All this was done to attract you to our meeting. You can understand then the disappointment of the members of the Parents' Association when only sixty parents out of a possible 200 attended. The Parents' Association strongly urges all parents to attend these important meetings designed to give you a knowledge of the workings of the Religious Schools and to enable you to help make the Schools outstanding.

I might add that at all future Parents' Association meetings the teachers will be present to answer questions about your children's progress in the Schools. Any additional ideas for our programs and functions will be gratefully accepted by Mrs. Harriet Howe, 240 East 79 Street.

In closing, may I again urge all parents to support this new organization. It has a magnificent group of earnest men and women on its Executive Committee who are striving with utmost zeal to improve our Schools. To that end you should also dedicate yourself. Success will tend to make your children's Jewish loyalty the stronger and more lasting.

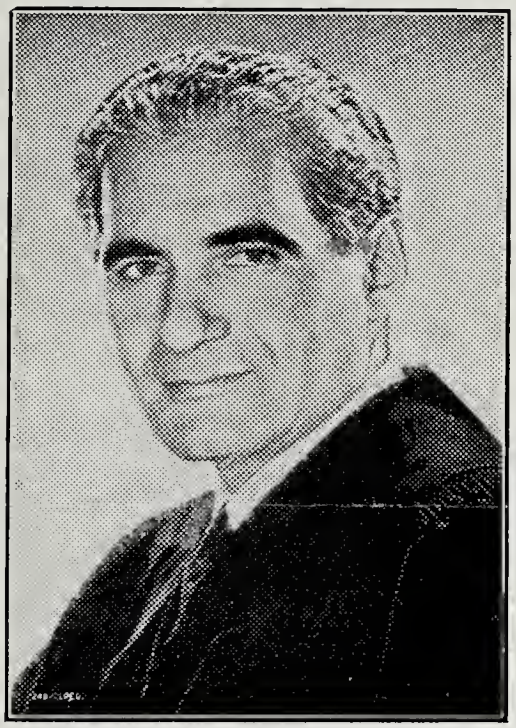
Very sincerely yours,
SAUL GODWIN
Chairman, School Board

SISTERHOOD ASKS

(*Continued from page* 1)

ticles, to send abroad. Men's groups are being asked to contribute toys and games for children, and the Jewish Education Association is contacting rabbis and laymen throughout the country to obtain foreign language books of all types. Every effort is being made to make everyone conscious of the need to give to those abroad, so as to make this *Hanukkah* a better one for displaced persons and overseas survivors.

UNITED SYNAGOGUE HONORS JUDGE BOTEIN AND I. B. OSEAS



Judge Bernard Botein

Israel B. Oseas

Judge Bernard Botein, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Park Avenue Synagogue, was elected to the post of President of the Metropolitan Council of the United Synagogue of America, at its meeting of November 17th. The meeting was held at the Jewish Theological Seminary. At the same time, Mr. I. B. Oseas, chairman of the Synagogue's Ritual Committee, was elected Secretary of the body. The election of the two delegates from this Congregation is a signal honor, and a recognition of the calibre of work being done to further the program of the United Synagogue.

Judge Botein, who is a Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, has been Chairman of the Board of Trustees for some years, and a very active participant in all Jewish communal affairs. Mr. Oseas, in addition to his chairmanship of the Ritual Committee, is also a member of the Board of Trustees, and was for five years a member of the School Board.

The Metropolitan Council was organized a year ago, to further the efforts of the United Synagogue of America, the national organization of conservative Jewish congregations. In his acceptance speech, Judge Botein emphasized the function of the Council in the fields of education and expansion of synagogue activity to include broadly communal activities. He commented in part "The Council is only one year old, but has made remarkable progress."

COLLEGIATE SERVICE

The Collegiate Forum being planned for Friday evening, December 27th is rapidly coming into final shape. Arrangements are being made by a committee under the chairmanship of Mrs. Milton Grass to have young people now on college campuses share the pulpit on that Friday evening. The general topic for discussion will be "Jewish Youth in the College Community." Special emphasis will be placed on home and early school background, the influence of the synagogue, and the effect of the collegiate experience including the direct action of college authorities.

Books for Gifts

Mrs. Seymour Wimpfheimer, chairman of the Library Committee of the Parents' Association, announces that the books listed below are available and recommended as *Hanukkah* gifts for children and adults of the Congregation. They may be ordered expeditiously by filling out an order and mailing it with a check to Mrs. Wimpfheimer, 1225 Park Ave., New York 28, N. Y.

It was mentioned in a previous column of School Highlights that this method of ordering books by members of the Congregation will permit the School to enhance its own library at the same time, on the basis of dividends provided through additional purchases.

Books for Adults

As A Driven Leaf, Milton Steinberg.....$3.50
East River, Sholem Asch..... 3.00
Peace of Mind, Joshua Loth Liebman..... 2.50
Life Line To Palestine, Ira Hirschman.... 2.75
Thieves in the Night, Arthur Koestler.... 2.75
The Old Country, Sholom Aleichem..... 3.00
Brandeis: A Free Man's Life, Mason..... 5.00
The Wise Men of Helm, Solomon Simon.. 2.50
Fighting Angel: Henrietta Szold, Elma Levinger 2.50
Through the Underground to Palestine, Irving F. Stone..... 2.50

Children's Books

Habibi and Yow (*6-8 years*)..... 2.00
Picture Book History of the Jews (*6-9 years*), Howard Fast..... 1.25
Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes for Jewish Children (*4-7 years*), Sara Levy 1.50
One God (*All ages*), Florence M. Fitch.... 2.00
The Aleph Bet Story Book (*8 years and up*), Deborah Pessin 1.50
The Strange Adventures of Danny Noor (*8 years and up*), Shelomo Ben Israel 2.00
What Danny Did (*6-8 years*), Sadie Weilerstein 2.00
Haym Solomon, Son of Liberty (*12 years and up*), Howard Fast..... 2.50
Song of the Dneiper (*12 years and up*), Zalman Shneour 3.00

COME TO THE

HANUKKAH PARTY

at THE PARK AVENUE SYNAGOGUE

on Tuesday Evening, December 17th, at 8:30 o'clock

For Members and Their Immediate Families

ADMISSION BY TICKET ONLY

BRING A CAN OF FOOD FOR THE SOS DRIVE

Anniversaries

The Synagogue takes pleasure in congratulating Mr. and Mrs. Charles Abrams who celebrate their fifty-seventh wedding anniversary on December 15th; and extends best wishes to Dr. and Mrs. Paul D. Waldman who mark their thirty-fifth anniversary on December 20th, and to Dr. and Mrs. Seymour Wimpfheimer who reach their tenth milestone Dec. 22.

Engagements

During the past month several young people announced their engagements and the Synagogue happily records them. Miss Marcia J. Levey, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur V. Levey, became engaged to Mr. Herbert N. Laudin. Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Robbins' daughter Marjorie was betrothed to Mr. Solomon. Michael S. Weiss, son of Dr. and Mrs. Adolph A. Weiss chose Miss Helene Stern as his bride-elect. Mr. and Mrs. Max Zahler's daughter Judith was engaged to Mr. Charles L. Weinberg.

Marriages

Best wishes are in order for Mr. and Mrs. George Lyttle's daughter Ruth who was married to Mr. Robert Satter on November 27th; and the Synagogue also wishes to congratulate Mr. Norman Schanin, Club Director and teacher in the Religious School, on his forthcoming marriage to Miss Roslyn Fleischer on December 22nd.

Deaths

The Synagogue extends its sincere condolences to Mrs. Morris Haft and Mrs. Jules Haft on the passing of their mother, Mrs. Ida Booth. We announce with regret the death of Mrs. Minnie Weill, the mother of Mr. Jack Weill.

WILL YOU ATTEND?

Monday, Dec. 9th, 8 p.m.—Fifth Session of the Adult Education Courses. Rabbi Kertzer will lecture on "The Zionist Impulse."

10 p.m.—Adult Education Committee meeting.

Sunday, Dec. 15th, 8:30 p.m.—Junior League, open meeting.

Monday, Dec. 16th, 8 p.m.—Sixth and final session of the Adult Education Course. Rabbi Kertzer will lecture on "The Artistic Element in Judaism."

Tuesday, Dec. 17th, 8:30 p.m.—Congregational *Hanukkah* party, in the vestry.

Sunday, Dec. 22nd, 3:30 p.m.—Junior League Dance for the benefit of *Youth Aliyah*, in the vestry. Music will be provided by Joe Moss' Orchestra.

Dr. Kohn Speaks Friday Evening

Dr. Jacob Kohn, Rabbi of Temple Sinai of Los Angeles, whom Rabbi Steinberg honors as his spiritual mentor, will be the speaker at the regular Friday evening service on December 13th, at 8:30 o'clock. His subject, "The Function of Fear in Religion," is in his particular field, and should prove very stimulating.

Dr. Kohn is a graduate of New York University where he taught philosophy for a time, and was ordained and received his doctorate at the Jewish Theological Seminary. For over twenty years he was rabbi of Temple Ansche Chesed in New York, where Rabbi Steinberg, then a boy of sixteen newly arrived in New York City, first came under his influence.

Rabbi Steinberg said of Dr. Kohn, "He is perhaps the best metaphysician in the American Rabbinate. His influence on me was decisive. I came to know him at a turning point in my youth. He has always seemed to me the ideal rabbi for our time and the American scene: of broad learning, both Hebrew and general, a traditionalist but a modernist also, a thorough-going idealist who lives his ideals. It is he who won me not only to the rabbinate but more basically to Judaism itself."

If only for that *mitzvah*, the Park Avenue Synagogue is honored to have Rabbi Kohn speak, and will attend the Friday evening service in full force.

JUNIOR LEAGUE DANCES FOR YOUTH ALIYAH

The Junior League is now busy with their forthcoming *Hanukkah* dance to take place in the Synagogue Vestry room on Sunday afternoon, December 22nd from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. This year, *Youth Aliyah*, will be the beneficiary of the proceeds of the dance. It is hoped that all those who missed the last Junior League dance will come and have a good time, contributing, in addition, to a worthy charity. Joe Moss' orchestra will supply the music for dancing, and all young people of the Synagogue and their friends are invited to attend. Tickets are priced at $1.25 per person.

School Highlights

A program of familiarizing the children of the Religious School with the purposes and activities of the Jewish agencies at work in the community today has been undertaken. To this end, a movie depicting the functions of the Federation of Jewish Charities was shown on Sunday morning, November 20th.

Mr. Norman Schanin, Religious School Club Director, has announced the institution of a Folk Dancing and Group Singing Workshop for club leaders, teachers, and Senior club members. The workshop sessions will be used to teach these activities to all present, who will then be prepared to transmit this skill to their groups. The first meeting was held on Tuesday evening, November 26th.

There will be an all-School *Hanukkah* celebration on December 22nd.

The Senior Clubs are participating in a social evening with several other metropolitan youth groups on Saturday evening, December 14th.

Winner of the Class of the Month contest for November was Class 6X whose teacher is Mr. Mordecai Halpern, a student at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Classes are judged on the basis of attendance, Keren Ami participation, conduct and special activities. Runner up for November was Class 5Y under the leadership of Miss Yvette Davis, herself a graduate of The Park Avenue Synagogue Religious School.

Hanukkah Licht For Sale

Menorahs, candles, and *dreydels* for the celebration of the *Hanukkah* festival will be available for purchase by members of the Congregation, it was announced by Mrs. Milton Heller. All those interested are requested to communicate with her at the Synagogue.

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